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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD

Letter dated 20 April 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights

I have the honour to transmit, enclosed herewith*, the document entitled "Aide mémoire on humanitarian consequences of the NATO aggression against Yugoslavia". I would like to ask you to have it published as an official document of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 9.

(Signed) Branko BRANKOVIC
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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AIDE-MEMOIRE
on humanitarian consequences of NATO aggression against Yugoslavia

The NATO Alliance aggression against the FR of Yugoslavia which started on 24 March 1999 is not only an attack on a sovereign and independent country. This aggression imperiled as well international peace and security, violated the United Nations Charter and international legal order, thus creating one of the largest humanitarian catastrophe in the world since the founding of the United Nations.

A huge NATO military force was engaged to drop bombs on the population of the FR of Yugoslavia, its infrastructure and industrial facilities. More than 5000 tons of most perilous explosive was dropped, including the internationally-prohibited cluster bombs. All of this has created enormous civilian casualties and large material destruction.

As the consequence of the twenty-five-day long bombardment, the entire population of the FR of Yugoslavia is affected, including 700 000 refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and especially the children, the elderly and the socially most vulnerable categories . The living conditions have dramatically changed for the 11 million citizens of the FR of Yugoslavia. Namely, from the onset of the aggression, citizens have to leave their dwellings every day in order to find refuge in cellars and shelters.

Due to the total destruction of numerous industrial facilities, hundreds of thousands workers became jobless. Their existence and that of 2 million of their family members was affected. Constant bombardment makes impossible the conduct of normal industrial activities and public services in almost all fields of human life, in particular in the field of industry, mining, transport, and especially in agriculture where the spring sowing is underway. Attacked and destroyed were numerous pharmaceutical factories as well as the most important health care institutions in Belgrade and in other places in the FR of Yugoslavia. That way, the health of the entire population was directly affected. For example, the bombardment damaged or destroyed hospitals, medical centers and maternity wards in Belgrade, Pristina, Cuprija, Aleksinac, Nis, Novi Sad, Cacak, Ivanjica and in many other cities.

After the destruction of residential buildings, hundreds of persons were left roofless, and the destruction of traffic lines, bridges, railroads and railway stations, airports, public institutions, kindergartens, schools and faculties, affected the everyday life of the population. Also affected was the supply of the population with essential living needs. The education for 800 000 pupils and students was suspended. The destruction of the heating plant alone, which is providing heating for half of the citizens of Belgrade, affected the survival of a million of residents of the capital city. After the destruction of a bridge - historical monument on the Danube river in Novi Sad, 600 000 residents were cut of drinking water supply since the main and city water supply system was constructed into the bridge.

The use of extremely lethal ammunition, including the one prohibited under all international conventions and the bombardment of oil refineries and warehouses storing raw materials used in the chemical industry, as well as fuel and ammonia storages (Belgrade, Pancevo, Novi Sad, Smederevo, Guca), including a number of other chemical plants, caused a large ecological catastrophe with lasting consequences for the FR of Yugoslavia, as well as for other countries in the region, the entire Europe and the Mediterranean.

Speak also of the crimes caused by the aggression, facts on direct attacks on hospitals and other health care centers, refugee convoys, kindergartens, schools, passenger trains, civilian vehicles, hotels and youth resorts. Were neither spared the cultural-historical monuments of which many were under the protection of the UNESCO.

The aggression, mass bombardment and systematic destruction of large cities such as Pristina, Prizren, Pec, Djakovica, Nis, Novi Sad and others, caused an exodus of refugees inside the country as well as towards neighboring countries in which, as in Macedonia for example, there were no refugees prior to the aggression. A large number of refugees is from Kosmet.

The situation for 700 000 refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, whom the FR of Yugoslavia has been sheltering for several years, had dramatically worsened. The refugee centers were directly bombarded, in particular in Pristina, Kursumlija and Kula. A large number of refugees were killed and an even larger number of them were injured during the NATO bombardment.

In view of the uninterrupted NATO aggression on the FR of Yugoslavia and the night-and-day bombardment, it is impossible to establish with accuracy all the material and other damage, and civilian casualties buried under the ruins and factories. Thus, this Aide-Memoire mentions only the damage and consequences occurred till 18 April 1999 at the eyes of the public and numerous world media which informed about it .

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES

SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE NATO ALLIANCE AGGRESSION AGAINST THE FR OF YUGOSLAVIA AND UNTIL 14 APRIL 1999, THE NATO ALLIANCE MADE OVER 6000 CRIMINAL ATTACKS AGAINST THE TERRITORY OF THE FR OF YUGOSLAVIA. IN THESE ATTACKS, 700 WARPLANES, OF WHICH 530 COMBAT PLANES WERE USED; MORE THAN 1500 CRUISE MISSILES WERE LAUNCHED AND OVER 5000 TONS OF EXPLOSIVES WERE DROPPED.

THESE ATTACKS TOOK THE LIVES OF OVER 500 CIVILIANS, WHEREAS MORE THAN 4000 SUSTAINED HEAVY INJURIES, OF WHICH THE WORST SUFFERINGS WERE IN KURSUMLIJA, PANCEVO, CACAK, KRAGUJEVAC, VRANJE, ALEKSINAC, ORAHOVAC, PRISTINA, GRDELICA GORGE. TWO REFUGEE CONVOYS ON THE DJAKOVICA-PRIZREN ROAD WERE ATTACKED, WHEN IN THE SEVERAL-HOUR LONG BOMBARDMENT BY NATO PLANES, 75 WOMEN, CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PERSONS WERE KILLED.

THREE MILLION CHILDREN OF THE FR OF YUGOSLAVIA ARE ENDANGERED AS A RESULT OF WAR AND BOMBARDMENT BY NATO CRIMINALS.

AFTER THESE BARBARIC ATTACKS, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS CITIZENS HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO POISONOUS GASSES, WHICH CAN HAVE LASTING CONSEQUENCES ON THE HEALTH OF THE ENTIRE POPULATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE FR OF YUGOSLAVIA BUT ALSO OF THE ENTIRE REGION, THE ENTIRE CONTINENT AND OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.

NOVI SAD AND PETROVARADIN RESIDENTS (600 000) REMAINED WITHOUT WATER WHEN THE PETROVARADIN BRIDGE WAS DESTROYED, BECAUSE THE MAIN AND THE CITY WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM WAS CONSTRUCTED INTO THE BRIDGE. ABOUT ONE MILLION CITIZENS IN THE FR OF YUGOSLAVIA ARE SHORT OF WATER SUPPLY DUE TO THE BOMBARDMENT.

DUE TO THE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, 500 000 WORKERS BECAME JOBLESS. 2 MILLION CITIZENS HAVE NO MEANS FOR LIVING AND CAN NOT ENSURE THE MINIMUM FOR EXISTENCE. A LARGE PART OF THE COUNTRY'S POPULATION IS BEGINNING TO FEEL THE EFFECTS OF THE BOMBARDMENT. GENERAL CONDITIONS OF LIVING, NOURISHMENT AND HEALTH PROTECTION WORSENEND CONSIDERABLY.

OVERALL MATERIAL DAMAGE IS ENORMOUS. PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES OF DAMAGES EXCEED SEVERAL BILLION DOLLARS.

HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS

THE NATO AVIATION ATTACKED MANY HOSPITALS AND OTHER HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS, OF WHICH MANY WERE DAMAGED OR EVEN TOTALLY DESTROYED :

- THE HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CENTRE IN THE LESKOVAC AREA;
- THE HOSPITAL AND POLYCLINIC IN NIS;
- THE GERONTOLOGICAL CENTER IN LESKOVAC;
- THE GENERAL HOSPITAL IN DJAKOVICA;
- THE CITY HOSPITAL IN NOVI SAD;
- THE CLINIC FOR GYNAECOLOGY AND MATERNITY WARD OF THE CLINICAL CENTRE IN BELGRADE;
- THE NEUROPSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL "DR. LAZA LAZAREVIC" AND THE CENTRAL PHARMACY OF THE EMERGENCY CENTRE IN BELGRADE;
- THE ARMY MEDICAL ACADEMY IN BELGRADE;
- THE MEDICAL CENTRE AND EMERGENCY UNIT IN ALEKSINAC;
- THE "SAINT SAVA" HOSPITAL IN BELGRADE;

- THE MEDICAL CENTRE IN KRALJEVO;

- THE DISPENSARY IN ZLATIBOR;

- THE MEDICAL CENTRE IN RAKOVICA;

- THE ORTHOPEADIC HOSPITAL IN BELGRADE;

- THE MATERNITY CLINIC - SAVSKI VENAC

SCHOOLS

OVER 190 SCHOOLS, FACULTIES AND FACILITIES FOR STUDENTS AND CHILDREN ALL OVER YUGOSLAVIA WERE DESTROYED OR DAMAGED (OVER 20 FACULTIES, 6 COLLEGES, 40 SECONDARY AND 80 PRIMARY SCHOOLS, 6 STUDENT DORMITORIES):

- THE "16 OCTOBER" AND "VLADIMIR ROLOVIC" PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BELGRADE;

- THE KINDERGARTEN IN PETLOVO BRDO SETTLEMENT IN BELGRADE; THE KINDERGARTEN IN NIS;

- NOVI SAD: PRIMARY SCHOOLS "TOZA MARKOVIC", "DJORDJE NATOSEVIC", "VELJKO VLAHOVIC", "SANGAJ" AND "DJ. DANICIC"; KINDERGARTEN "RAINBOW", KINDERGARTENS IN VISARIONOVA STREET AND IN SANGAJ SETTLEMENT; THE TRAFFIC SCHOOL CENTER, THE FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY;

- FOUR PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND A MEDICAL HIGH SCHOOL IN THE LESKOVAC AREA;

- TWO PRIMARY AND A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN CUPRIJA. WERE ALSO DESTROYED THE SPORT CENTRE, THE MEDICAL CENTRE AND THE DENTAL DISPENSARY;

- THE PRIMARY SCHOOL IN LUCANI, AS WELL AS A LARGER NUMBER OF EDUCATION FACILITIES IN THE AREA OF KOSOVO AND METOHIJA;

- THE FACULTIES OF LAW AND ECONOMY AND THE PRIMARY SCHOOL "RADOJE DOMANOVIC" IN NIS;

- THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KRALJEVO AND IN THE VILLAGES OF CVETKA, AKETA AND LADJEVCI;

- SOMBOR: THE PRIMARY SHOOLS "I.L.RIBAR", "A.MRAZOVIC" AND "N. VUKICEVIC" AS WELL AS "NIKOLA TESLA" IN KLJAJICEVO CLOSE TO SOMBOR;

- THE SCHOOL CENTRE IN KULA;

- THE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND THE ENGINEERING SECONDARY SCHOOL IN RAKOVICA

ROADS

THE ROAD AND RAILWAY NETWORKS, ESPECIALLY THE ROAD OR RAIL BRIDGES WERE ATTACKED, OF WHICH ELEVEN WERE ENTIRELY DESTROYED AND ELEVEN HEAVILY DAMAGED.AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF BRIDGES ON THE DANUBE THE TRANSPORT ON THIS INDUSTRIAL ARTERY WHICH REPRESENTS THE SHORTEST LINK BETWEEN THE NORTH AND THE MEDITERRANEAN WAS DISCONTINUED.

INDUSTRIAL AND CIVILIAN FACILITIES, PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

THE AIR STRIKES HAVE SO FAR DESTROYED OR DAMAGED ALL OVER THE FR OF YUGOSLAVIA SEVERAL THOUSANDS INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES AND DWELLINGS. IN THE LESKOVAC AREA ALONE, OVER 3500 INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES AND DWELLINGS WERE EITHER DESTROYED OR DAMAGED . THE DEVASTATION OF NATO FORCES WAS PARTICULARLY MANIFEST IN PRISTINA, NOVI SAD, ALEKSINAC, DJAKOVICA, PROKUPLJE, GRACANICA, CUPRIJA, ETC. HOUSING SETTLEMENTS ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF BELGRADE - KIJEVO KNEZEVAC, BATAJNICA, JAKOVO, BORCA, AS WELL AS THE AREA AROUND PANCEVO, WERE ALSO UNDER ATTACK.

IN CUPRIJA ALONE, 500 HOUSES WERE DESTROYED. THE SAME NUMBER OF HOUSES WAS DESTROYED IN ALEKSINAC. IN THESE TWO SMALL TOWNS ALONE, 5000 PERSONS REMAINED ROOFLESS.

1. INDUSTRY AND TRADE:

THE NATO AGGRESSORS' ATTACKS TARGETED THE CIVILIAN FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES WHICH DIRECTLY CATER FOR THE NEEDS OF THE POPULATION.

2. AGRICULTURE:

SEVERAL THOUSANDS HECTARES OF FERTILE LAND HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE BOMBARDMENT. FACTORIES THAT PRODUCED ARTIFICIAL FERTILISERS AND THE RESERVES WERE DESTROYED. THIS DESTRUCTION ENDAGERED THE PRODUCTION OF FOOD. MANY PRIVATE FARMS AND AGRICULTURAL COMPLEXES WERE DESTROYED.

1. PIK "KOPAONIK" IN KURSUMLIJA;

2. PIK "MLADOST" IN GNJILANE;

3. THE AGRICULTURAL COMPLEX "MALIZGAN" IN DOLAC;

4. THE AGRICULTURAL COMPLEX "DJURO STRUGAR" IN KULA;

5. IN FOREST FIRES CAUSED BY NATO CRUISE MISSILES AND BOMBS, OVER 250 HECTARES OF FORESTS ALL OVER THE FR OF YUGOSLAVIA HAVE BEEN BURNED DOWN;

6. SEVERAL THOUSANDS OF FERTILE LAND, MANY RIVERS, LAKES AND UNDERGROUND WATERS HAVE BEEN POLLUTED DUE TO THE SPILLAGE OF OIL SPILLS AND PETROCHEMICAL SUBSTANCES;

3. PUBLIC AND HOUSING FACILITIES

TENS OF THOUSANDS OF HOUSING FACILITIES ALL OVER YUGOSLAVIA WERE DAMAGED OR DESTROYED, OF WHICH THE MOST STRIKING EXAMPLE OF DESTRUCTION OF HOUSING BLOCKS WAS IN ALEKSINAC (500 HOUSES), IN CUPRIJA (500 HOUSES), IN PRISTINA, KRALJEVO, RAKOVICA, NIS, KRAGUJEVAC, AND IN OTHER CITIES. STRIKING WAS ALSO THE DESTRUCTION OF PUBLIC FACILITIES AMONG WHICH ARE:

- THE BUILDING OF THE POST OFFICE IN PRISTINA (07.04.1999)

- THE REFUGEE CENTRE IN PRISTINA (07.04.1999)

- THE SKI CENTRE "TORNIK" ON ZLATIBOR MOUNTAIN (08.04.1999)

- THE DIVCIBARE MOUNTAIN RESORT (11.04.1999)

- THE "BACISTE" HOTEL ON MOUNTAIN KOPAONIK (12.04.1999)

- THE CITY HEATING PLANT IN KRUSEVAC (12-13.04.1999)

- THE CITY HEATING PLANT IN NOVI BEOGRAD (13.04.1999)

- THE METEOROLOGICAL STATION ON MOUNTAIN KOPAONIK DAMAGED (13.04.1999)

- FOUR LIBRARIES IN RAKOVICA: "RADOJE DAKIC", "ISIDORA SEKULIC", "MILOS CRNJANSKI" AND "DUSAN MATIC" (16.04.1999)

- THE REFUGEE CAMP " 7 JULI" IN PARACIN HAS SUSTAINED HEAVY DAMAGE.

CULTURAL-HISTORICAL MONUMENTS AND RELIGIOUS SHRINES

1. MEDIEVAL MONASTERIES AND RELIGIOUS SHRINES

- MONASTERY GRACANICA FROM 14TH CENTURY (24.03.-06.04.1999)

- MONASTERY IN RAKOVICA FROM 17TH CENTURY (29.03.1999)

- PARTIARCHATE OF PEC (01.04.1999)

- CHURCH IN JELASNICA NEAR SURDULICA (04.04.1999)

- MONASTERY OF THE CHURCH OF ST. JURAJ (BUILT IN 1714) IN PETROVARADIN (01.04.1999)

- MONASTERY OF THE HOLY VIRGIN FROM 12TH CENTURY AT THE ESTUARY OF THE KOSANICA IN THE TOPLICA - AREA OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF KURSUMLIJA (04.03.1999);

- MONASTERY ST. NICHOLAS FROM 12TH CENTURY IN THE AREA OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF KURSUMLIJA (04.03.1999)

- MONASTERY OF ST. ARCHANGEL GABRIEL IN ZEMUN (05.04.1999)

- ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH ST. ANTONIO IN DJAKOVICA (29.03.1999)

- ORTHODOX CEMETERY IN GNJILANE (30.03.1999)

- MONUMENTS DESTROYED IN BOGUTOVAC (08.04.1999)

- MEMORIAL COMPLEX KADINJACA (08.04.1999)

- MONASTERY VOJLOVICA NEAR PANCEVO (12.04.1999)

- MONASTERY HOPOVO, ICONOSTASIS DAMAGED (12.04.1999)

- ORTHODOX CEMETERY IN PRISTINA (12.04.1999)

- MONASTERY CHURCH OF ST. ARCHANGEL MICHAEL (16.04.1999)

2. CULTURAL-HISTORICAL MONUMENTS AND MUSEUMS

- SEVERE DAMAGE TO THE ROOF STRUCTURE OF THE PETROVARADIN FORTRESS (01.04.1999)

- SEVERE DAMAGE TO "TABACKI BRIDGE", FOUR CENTURIES OLD, IN DJAKOVICA (05.04.1999)

- SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE TO THE BUILDINGS IN STARA CARSIJA (OLD STREET) IN DJAKOVICA (05.04.1999)

- DESTROYED THE ARCHIVES HOUSED IN ONE OF THE GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS IN BELGRADE (03.04.1999)

- MEMORIAL COMPLEX IN GUCEVO (LOZNICA)

- MEMORIAL COMPLEX "SUMARICE" IN KRAGUJEVAC

- VOJVODINA MUSEUM IN NOVI SAD

- OLD MILITARY BARRACKS IN KRAGUJEVAC - UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE STATE (16.04.1999)

- THE OLD BRIDGE IN NOVI SAD - SYMBOL OF TORTURE OF SERBS AND JEWS IN 1941

The humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo and Metohija and in the entire FR of Yugoslavia was caused by the NATO aggression. The aggression shows what happens when one violates the UN Charter and international law. Also, abuse of military force by NATO imperils international peace and

security, whereas international relations and international legal order received the most serious blow since the World War II.

For an efficient settlement of humanitarian problems, it is necessary to immediately halt the NATO aggression. The Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Government of the Republic of Serbia have called all displaced persons and refugees to return safely to their homes. On 6 April, the Yugoslav authorities have declared a cessation of all anti-terrorist operations in Kosovo and Metohija, which represents an important step towards the settlement of humanitarian problems. At the meeting between the Vice-President of the Federal Government, Nikola Šainovic and Dr. Ibrahim Rugova of 6 April 1999, an accord was reached to act jointly in securing conditions for the return of displaced persons and refugees as well as in solving other humanitarian issues in cooperation with the ICRC and the UNHCR, including Yugoslav humanitarian organization.

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